

Study links smoking and drinking

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A University of North Carolina study suggests chromosome regions containing genes related to alcohol addiction affect drinking behavior in smokers.

The UNC-Chapel Hill Medical School researchers say their study offers evidence that the interaction between smoking and alcohol consumption may partly be due to overlapping genetic risk factors.

The research also provides further confirmation that alcoholism is a complex behavior drawing from both environmental and genetic factors, they said.

"Since we know that people who drink often smoke and that smokers often drink, we thought it reasonable to collect some information about the drinking behavior in these families," said lead study author Kirk Wilhelmsen, associate professor of genetics and neurology.

The study appears in the December issue of the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

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